Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: WA-II-260

Name: W-3221/WOLFESVILLE RD. OVER BEAVER CRK.

The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridge received the following determination of eligibility.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Eligibility Recommended ___X___ Eligibility Not Recommended _____

Criteria: ____A ____B ____C ____D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G __None

Comments:_____

_____

_____

Reviewer, OPS: Anne E. Bruder_____ Date: 3 April 2001____

Reviewer, NR Program: Peter E. Kurtze_____ Date: 3 April 2001____

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES **MHT NO. WA-IV-260**
HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY
MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

NAME AND SHA NO.: W-3221

LOCATION
Road Name and Number: Wolfesville Road over Beaver Creek
City/Town: Smithsburg X vicinity
County: Washington

Ownership: _ State X County _ Municipal _ Other

Bridge projects over: _ Road _ Railway X Water _ Land

Is bridge located within designated district?: _ yes X no
___ NR listed district _ NR determined eligible district
___ locally designated _ other
Name of District _

BRIDGE TYPE

__ Timber Bridge
__ Beam Bridge __ Truss-Covered __ Trestle __ Timber-and-Concrete

__ Stone Arch Bridge

__ Metal Truss Bridge

__ Moveable Bridge
__ Swing __ Bascule Single Leaf __ Bascule Multiple Leaf
__ Vertical Lift __ Retractile __ Pontoon

__ Metal Girder
__ Rolled Girder __ Rolled Girder Concrete Encased
__ Plate Girder __ Plate Girder Concrete Encased

__ Metal Suspension

__ Metal Arch

__ Metal Cantilever

X Concrete
_ Concrete Arch _ Concrete Slab X Concrete Beam _ Rigid Frame
_ Other Type Name ___

DESCRIPTION

Describe the Setting:

Bridge W-3221 carries Wolfesville Road over Beaver Creek in northeastern Washington County. Wolfesville Road runs north and south, while Beaver Creek flows east and west. Located on the border of the Piedmont and Appalachian Plateau physiographic provinces, the bridge is surrounded by wooded land to the north and west, and residences to the south and east.

Describe the Superstructure and Substructure:
(Discuss points identified in Context Addendum, Section C)

Bridge W-3221, a single-span concrete tee-beam structure, has a total bridge length of 29'. The 26'-8" wide asphalt roadway carries two lanes of traffic. Concrete beams support the reinforced concrete slab of the original portion of the bridge, while the widened portion of the bridge consists of a concrete slab spanning the length of the structure. Steel W-beam guardrails serve as the balustrades on the east and west sides of the bridge. The substructure consists of concrete abutments and concrete wing walls.

Inspection reports from 1973 through 1993 document the changes to the bridge. Reports between 1973 and 1989 consistently recommend replacement of the pipe railing with guardrail and repairing the cracked and spalled beams and slab. Between 1989 and 1991, these suggested changes and repairs apparently were made. The 1991 report indicated that the repairs were not binding to the old concrete.

A survey of historic concrete beam bridges undertaken by the Maryland State Highway Administration in the Fall of 1995 identified 113 bridges of that type located throughout the state. Slightly more than two-thirds (76) of that total were single-span bridges.

Discuss major alterations:

According to the available documentary evidence, the bridge was reconstructed in 1955. It appears that this reconstruction consisted of widening the bridge to accommodate two lanes of traffic. The concrete parapets were probably replaced with metal pipe railings during this time. Steel W-beam guardrails have since replaced the pipe railings.

HISTORY

When Built: 1915/reconstructed 1955
Why Built: Statewide road improvement programs and local transportation needs.
Who Built: Unknown
Who Designed: Unknown
Why Altered: Widening bridge to accommodate two lanes of traffic
Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge building campaign?: No

This bridge was built early in the Good Roads Movement era but was not one of the primary corridors slated for improvement.

SURVEYOR ANALYSIS

This bridge may have NR significance for association with:

_ A (Events) _ B (Person) _ C (Engineering/Architectural Character)

Was this bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?

The improvement of Washington County roads most likely resulted from several events that occurred during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The original Good Roads movement was aimed toward improving the primary routes through the state as well as connecting roads between counties. A later impact of this crusade included the widening, straightening, and grading of secondary roads, and construction of new bridges to carry these rebuilt roads. Further, the rapid increase of automobile, truck, and bus traffic prompted the replacement of the existing narrow and weak bridges with new, wider, and stronger concrete structures. As time, labor, and money-saving plans created by the State Roads Commission (SRC), the establishment of district engineering offices during the 1910s and the development of standardized bridge designs also aided in the construction of modern bridges throughout the state. During the 1920s, emphasis of the SRC was on improving safety and comfort of main routes while building up the secondary roads and the farm-to-market network of feeder roads. By the 1930s, bridges believed to be adequate when initial road reconstruction was undertaken became unacceptable for modern traffic and many new structures were constructed.

When the bridge was built, and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?

No, the construction of this bridge did not play an active role in the growth or development of this portion of Washington County.

Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation, and would the bridge add or detract from the historic and visual character of the possible district?

No, this bridge is not located within an area which is eligible for historic district designation.

Is the bridge a significant example of its type?

No, the reconstruction in 1955 for road widening and replacement of parapets with metal pipe railings and later with steel W-beam guardrails have altered this bridge so that it no longer serves as a significant example of its type. Despite the widening to the west, the 1915 portion of the bridge may have been significant as an example of an early concrete girder bridge, however, the replacement of the parapets has impaired the bridge's integrity.

Does the bridge retain integrity of the important elements described in the Context Addendum?

No, this bridge does not retain integrity of its character defining elements. Reconstruction of the structure in 1955 added a concrete slab span and new parapets to the bridge.

Is the bridge a significant example of the work of the manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer, and why?

No, this bridge is not a significant example of the work of the manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer. This bridge was most likely built to standard state specifications, which corresponded to the structure's span length and year.

Should this bridge be given further study before significance analysis is made, and why?

No, this bridge should not receive further study.

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P.A.C. Spero and Company and Louis Berger and Associates, Inc.
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SURVEYOR INFORMATION

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Maryland Historic Highway Bridges

Bridge Type Concrete Beam

Map Thurmont, A-9

County Washington WA-IV-260

Bridge # and Name W-3221, Wolfesville Road over Beaver Creek